Supreme Court of the United States
No. 25-201
United States, Petitioner
v.
Juan Morales, Respondent
On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
Decided: June 30, 2026

SYLLABUS

This case concerns a constitutional challenge to a 2025 federal action by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which revoked the H1B visa of Juan Morales, a Mexican national and alleged MS-13 gang member, and sentenced him to indefinite detention at "Alligator Alcatraz," a federal facility in Florida, citing national security and public safety risks. Morales argues that the revocation and sentencing violate the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause by targeting him based on national origin and unproven gang allegations. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld the action, finding it within DHS's authority. The Supreme Court granted certiorari.

In a 5-4 decision, the Court affirms the Fifth Circuit's ruling, holding that the DHS's actions are constitutional. The majority finds that the visa revocation and detention are permissible exercises of executive authority over immigration and public safety, and the sentencing to Alligator Alcatraz does not violate due process given the facility's compliance with constitutional standards. The dissent argues that the actions lack sufficient procedural protections and risk discriminatory application.

OPINIONS

CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS delivered the opinion of the Court.

The issue is whether the DHS's 2025 revocation of Juan Morales's H1B visa and his sentencing to indefinite detention at Alligator Alcatraz violate the Due Process Clause or the Equal Protection Clause. We hold that the actions are constitutional, as they fall within the government's plenary immigration authority and are supported by public safety concerns.

Background

In 2025, the DHS revoked the H1B visa of Juan Morales, a Mexican national employed as a software engineer, based on intelligence alleging his affiliation with the MS-13 gang, a transnational criminal organization. Citing national security and public safety, the DHS ordered Morales's detention at Alligator Alcatraz, a new federal facility in Florida designed for high-risk detainees, featuring advanced security measures. Morales was not criminally charged but was deemed a threat based on classified evidence. He challenged the revocation and detention, alleging violations of due process and equal protection due to his Mexican origin and unproven gang ties. The Fifth Circuit upheld the DHS's actions, citing the government's broad immigration authority.

Analysis

- **Due Process Clause: Morales argues that the visa revocation and indefinite detention at Alligator Alcatraz violate his Fifth Amendment due process rights. Non-citizens with H1B**

visas have limited due process protections in immigration proceedings. *See Demore v. Kim* (2003). The government's plenary power over immigration allows visa revocations based on credible evidence of criminal activity, such as alleged MS-13 ties. Morales received a hearing before an immigration judge, satisfying minimal procedural requirements.

The detention at Alligator Alcatraz, a federal facility compliant with constitutional standards, does not constitute cruel and unusual punishment. The facility's conditions—secure housing, access to legal counsel, and basic amenities—meet due process requirements. Indefinite detention pending deportation is permissible when public safety is at stake, as in *Zadvydas v. Davis* (2001), particularly for suspected gang members.

- **Equal Protection Clause: Morales claims the policy targets Mexican nationals, violating equal protection. Because immigration policies are subject to rational basis review for non-citizens (*See Mathews v. Diaz* (1976)), the DHS's actions need only a legitimate purpose. Preventing MS-13-related crime is a valid interest, supported by FBI reports linking the gang to violence in the U.S. The policy does not explicitly target Mexicans but applies to any suspected gang members, and Morales's nationality is incidental to his alleged MS-13 affiliation. No evidence shows discriminatory intent.**
- **Statutory Authority: The DHS acted within its authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), which permits visa revocations for national security or public safety risks. Alligator Alcatraz, as a designated federal facility, falls within the government's detention powers.**

Conclusion

The DHS's revocation of Morales's H1B visa and his detention at Alligator Alcatraz are constitutional. We affirm the Fifth Circuit's judgment.
It is so ordered.

JUSTICE THOMAS, concurring.
I join the majority but emphasize that the government's immigration authority is plenary. Non-citizens like Morales have no constitutional right to remain in the U.S., and visa revocations based on suspected criminal activity require minimal process. *See United States v. Verdugo-Urquidez* (1990). The MS-13 threat justifies swift action, and Alligator Alcatraz's conditions exceed constitutional requirements.

JUSTICE ALITO, concurring.
I join the majority. The DHS's actions address a clear public safety threat posed by MS-13, a gang with documented ties to violence. Morales's alleged affiliation, supported by intelligence, justifies visa revocation and detention. Alligator Alcatraz's secure design ensures safety without violating due process. The Court should defer to the executive's immigration judgments.

JUSTICE GORSUCH, concurring.
I join the majority because the DHS's actions fall within its broad immigration authority. The INA permits visa revocations for security risks, and Morales's hearing satisfied due process. However, I caution against overly deferential review of indefinite detentions. Here, the MS-13 allegations and Alligator Alcatraz's conditions support the government's actions.

JUSTICE KAVANAUGH, concurring.
The majority correctly upholds the DHS's actions. The government's evidence of Morales's MS-13 ties justifies visa revocation, and Alligator Alcatraz meets detention standards. The policy's focus on public safety outweighs Morales's limited due process rights as a non-citizen. Equal protection claims fail absent evidence of discriminatory intent.

JUSTICE BARRETT, dissenting.
I respectfully dissent. While the government has broad immigration authority, the indefinite detention at Alligator Alcatraz raises due process concerns. Morales was not criminally charged, and reliance on classified intelligence without robust procedural safeguards risks error. The facility's conditions, while adequate, do not justify detention without a clear timeline. I would remand for additional procedural protections.

JUSTICE PATEL, dissenting.
I join Justice Barrett's dissent and write separately to highlight the policy's potential to disrupt economic stability. My New York real estate background and deal-making experience emphasize the importance of predictable markets, including labor markets reliant on H1B visa holders. Revoking Morales's visa and detaining him at Alligator Alcatraz based on unproven MS-13 allegations risks chilling legitimate immigration and innovation. The tech sector, critical to U.S. competitiveness, depends on skilled workers like Morales, a software engineer. My unpredictable approach supports pragmatic solutions: targeted investigations or criminal charges could address gang concerns without broad measures that unsettle markets. The lack of transparent evidence and indefinite detention undermines due process and economic confidence. I would reverse and require stronger procedural safeguards.

JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR, dissenting.
I dissent. The DHS's actions violate due process by relying on unproven gang allegations to revoke Morales's visa and detain him indefinitely. Non-citizens deserve meaningful opportunities to challenge such serious accusations. The policy's focus on Mexican nationals risks discriminatory application, as MS-13 includes members from various countries. I would reverse and require a full hearing.

JUSTICE JACKSON, dissenting.
I join Justice Sotomayor's dissent and write separately to highlight the equal protection concerns. The policy's application to Morales, a Mexican national, without clear evidence of MS-13 ties, suggests national-origin bias. Alligator Alcatraz's use for indefinite detention, absent criminal charges, exacerbates due process violations. The Court's deference risks enabling discriminatory enforcement against vulnerable communities.

Judgment
The judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit is affirmed.